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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 004563

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DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT,
FRIDAY, AUGUST 13, 2004

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Sarp border gate to be opened - Sabah
Final attack on Najaf - Aksam
Shiite resistance stuns Americans - Hurriyet
Karamanlis: Turkey a part of Europe - Hurriyet
Business Week: Iraq war ended Turkish-Israeli friendship -
Milliyet
Arrest warrant for Chalabi suspended - Milliyet
Bush forgets Iraq, criticizes Kerry - Sabah

OPINION MAKERS

Saakashvili: Georgia, Turkey parts of a whole - Zaman
Erdogan's peace message for Georgia - Yeni Safak
US launches offensive, Shiites flee Najaf - Zaman
US launches offensive against Shiites in Najaf - Cumhuriyet
US operation to 'crush' Shiite resisters - Zaman
US destroys Najaf - Yeni Safak
Muslim world reacts to US attack on Najaf - Radikal
Rumsfeld points to Iran threat - Cumhuriyet
Karamanlis on good terms with Erdogan - Yeni Safak
UN: Israel has killed 3,553 Palestinians over four years -
Cumhuriyet
Castro turns 78 - Radikal

BRIEFING

PM Erdogan visits Georgia: Prime Minister Erdogan, in
Tbilisi for an official visit, attended a meeting of the
Turkey-Georgia Business Council on Thursday. Erdogan told
the Council that Georgia should accelerate construction of
the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline project. Erdogan
also noted that the strategic Shah Deniz natural gas project
from Baku to Turkey through Tbilisi would ease Georgia's
energy problems. Georgian President Saakashvili agreed with
Erdogan, saying the Shah Deniz project was essential for the
economic independence of Georgia. During his meetings in
Tbilisi, Erdogan also pointed to developments in south
Ossetia as posing a threat to regional peace. Turkish
dailies regard Erdogan's remarks in support of Georgia's
territorial integrity as a covert message to Russia. 'We
will have a chance to discuss these issues with the Russians
during the visit to Turkey by President Putin in early
September,' Erdogan told reporters. Saakashvili and Erdogan
later visited the Sarp border crossing, which Saakashvili
said should be a 'gate of friendship, and Georgia's window
to Europe.' PM Erdogan agreed with the Georgians' request
that the border post be opened to visa-free travel between
the two countries.

Rumsfeld supports Baku on Nagorno-Karabakh: On a one-day
working visit to Baku, US Secretary of Defense Donald
Rumsfeld voiced hope for a solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh
problem within the framework of Azerbaijan's territorial
integrity, Turkish papers report. Responding to a
reporter's question, Rumsfeld said the US has been
supporting a solution to the problem through the mediation
efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group, which the US co-chairs.
Rumsfeld also said that Iran's nuclear program is a threat
to its neighbors and a risk for the further proliferation of
nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, "Hurriyet" reports that Armenia
has been conducting a military exercise with 2,000 troops in
the occupied territories of Nagorno-Karabakh.

US Adana Deputy Consul visits Diyarbakir: US Deputy Consul
to Adana, Alicia Allison, paid a visit to the governor's
office in Diyarbakir and offered condolences over a
policeman who had been killed in fighting with PKK militants
late July, papers report. Allison later called on the
Kurdish mayor of Diyarbakir, Osman Baydemir, who had been

fiercely criticized for offering condolences to the family of a PKK militant killed in the same clash.

Business Week: Turkey in Transition: Turkish dailies give extensive coverage to a "Business Week" article claiming that Turkey's ties with Israel and the United States have been damaged as a result of the US war in Iraq. "It wasn't so long ago that Israeli PM Sharon called Turkey the most important nation in the world to Israel, but the friendship between these two Middle Eastern democracies has cooled," Business Week claims. Former US Ambassador Mark Parris asserted that Ankara has cancelled some business contracts with Israel. "Unlike Israel, Turkey would like a strong central government in Baghdad to keep the Kurds in check, and Turkey is outraged at reports that Israel is training Kurds in northern Iraq," the article said. "The Sharon government's denial of those charges ring true because it doesn't make sense to choose a handful of Kurds over a country with Turkey's size and clout," the commentary continued. Business Week also speculates that although Turkey had been uneasy with the US for "doing nothing" against the PKK in northern Iraq, Ankara has refrained from launching an operation against the Kurds for fear that such an action could disrupt Turkey's dialogue with the EU.

EDITORIAL OPINION

"The Strategy that Creates Enemies"

Sami Kohen opined in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (8/13): "Yesterday's assault on Najaf by US troops reminded me Dale Carnegie's famous book 'How to Win Friends and Influence People.' If we need to describe yesterday's assault in one sentence, we should change the name of Carnegie's book to 'How to Create Enemies and Earn Hatred.' There is a certain military logic behind this latest assault against the Shiite resistance. The Shiite militants, under the leadership of Mukteda El-Sadr, have declared war against the US and the occupation. The US felt it necessary to launch a major military operation in order to suppress the revolt. If you look at it from the military angle, it is inevitable that US forces will be able to take Najaf. The problem is that the military logic is in contradiction with the political reality. By taking control of Najaf, the US will also earn the hatred of the Shiites and many other Iraqis as well. Reactions against the Najaf attack have been coming in from around the Arab world. Strangely, the US had been hopeful that the Shiites would support the Iraq operation. In fact, coalition forces had some Shiite support at the beginning, when Shiites believed the US would help free them from Saddam's cruel regime. The majority of Iraq's population is Shiite, and the Shiites believed that a change of regime was an opportunity for them to establish their own sovereignty. With this in mind, they declared war against the US and the interim Iraqi government. There was an interesting article in the 'Boston Globe' yesterday. During an interview with US troops, one soldier responded to the journalist's question saying that 'we came here to topple Saddam and pass the administration to Iraqis.' He then added 'what is left now, just to win more enemies and more hatred?'"

"The Massacre in Iraq"

Ergun Babahan commented in the mass appeal "Sabah" (8/13): "The waters are heating up again in Iraq. Yesterday's assault on Najaf is proof that the war in Iraq continues long after President Bush announced the end of major combat operations. The occupation of Iraq was based on false information about the presence of WMDs in Iraq. Secretary Powell and regional leaders stressed continuously that such a war would cause serious problems for other countries in the region. There isn't a single day that goes by without news of innocents being killed in Iraq. Yesterday, US planes poured death over Najaf without any consideration for civilians, including children. These are the real owners of Iraq, and they are resisting with all their power against the occupier of their land. These developments in Iraq spell danger for Turkey as well. The US administration, which has transformed Iraq into a terror center, never stops threatening Iran and Syria. The world remains quiet to this human drama. Every day, tens of thousands of people flee their homes and innocent people become targets for bombs. But still no one is questioning the US. During the bloody counter-terrorism process in Turkey, Washington's stance was overly sensitive. But now, with torture and executions without trial, the US is writing a bloody history in the Middle East. Launching the operation with the promise of bringing democracy to the region, they can now offer nothing but starvation, torture, and death. Like the Palestinians, the Iraqis are paying a heavy price for a war not of their own choosing."

EDELMAN